

of Madeira, the "Pearl of the Atlantic." For the last 100 years, New Bedford has hosted the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, featuring authentic Portuguese food, wine, and music, along with lessons on Portuguese history and folklore.

Today, this historic feast continues to maintain its cultural significance to those who wish to honor the Madeira customs. Additionally, it is known to provide endless entertainment to the entire New Bedford community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the town of New Bedford and the Club Madeirense S.S. Sacramento, Inc., who sponsor the feast, for the celebration of the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament's 100th anniversary. May this magnificent cultural event continue to flourish for many years to come.

COMMEMORATING AVANCE'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF EMPOWERING FAMILIES

HON. LLOYD DOGGETT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 2014

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor AVANCE, Inc. and to recognize its 40th anniversary of service to families and children in Texas. This outstanding organization was founded in 1973 to provide family support services and education to parents. AVANCE began in one room of the Mirasol Housing Project on the West Side of San Antonio with a handful of families and has grown into a national organization with sites across the country.

Every day, AVANCE's staff works tirelessly to "Unlock America's Potential" by strengthening families in at-risk communities through effective parent education and support programs. This effort has changed the lives of thousands of Texas families, leading the way for stronger, healthier communities; a sharper workforce; and increased educational attainment.

AVANCE has successfully capitalized on parents' inner strength and innate love for their children to help them become the best teachers and stewards of their children's growth and success. AVANCE works on the principle that parental education alone is sometimes not enough; an effective intervention must build parents' resilience, interpersonal connections, networks, and access to education, jobs and other opportunities. True parental engagement empowers parents to become advocates for their children and families.

Studies have shown the effectiveness of AVANCE's two-generation approach. In an external study designed to assess whether participation led to changes in education and socio-economic status, results showed that the AVANCE program has positive effects on families long after they graduate—especially for the most disadvantaged families. Parents had dramatic increases in educational attainment, better jobs and home ownership.

Congratulations to AVANCE President and CEO Richard J. Noriega and the AVANCE Board of Directors. Today, AVANCE has active sites in the Texas cities of San Antonio, Austin, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, El Paso, Waco, Del Rio, San Juan and in the Rio

Grande Valley as well as in several other states.

Mr. Speaker, I join with our community in expressing congratulations and deep gratitude to AVANCE for its more than four decades of exemplary service and dedication to the families of Texas. We wish you many more years of success toward fulfilling your mission of Unlocking America's potential.

H.R. 5078 AND H. RES. 644

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 2014

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose H.R. 5078, the Waters of the United States Regulatory Overreach Protection Act of 2014, and had I been present would have voted against the legislation offered by Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

I am concerned that this legislation would prevent both the current and future Administrations from undergoing a rulemaking process to clarify enforcement of Clean Water Act protections of streams and tributaries around the country. This rulemaking process is necessary to clarify what is now an unclear and confusing set of guidelines as to which waterways fall under jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act.

The small streams, wetlands, headwaters, and tributaries that are affected by this ruling flow into the drinking water of over 117 million Americans, support businesses and recreation, and are crucial habitats for wildlife, including in my home state of Rhode Island. The Administration has undergone an open and transparent process, including a lengthy public comment period that is still underway, to come up with a rule that more clearly defines which waterways are under jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act, in order to protect our country's drinking water supply and waterways from pollution, actions that benefit every American. Preventing the Executive Branch from clarifying this issue jeopardizes the safety of waterways across the country.

Additionally, I strongly oppose H. Res. 644, condemning the President for the prisoner exchange of five Guantanamo Bay prisoners for Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl, and had I been present I would have voted against it. As Commander in Chief of the U.S. Military, the President has a constitutional responsibility to protect the lives of U.S. servicemembers, as well as the lives of U.S. citizens abroad. While Members of Congress may not agree with the President's decision, a resolution calling his actions illegal is hardly helpful or useful at this time. And the fact remains, an American soldier is home safely because the President took seriously his constitutional responsibilities to protect American lives.

The decision made by the President was made in close consultation with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey. Sergeant Bergdahl had been held prisoner by Taliban forces since 2009. It was determined that there was a very narrow window of opportunity to ensure his safe return. General Dempsey has said that the opportunity to make a prisoner exchange for Sergeant Bergdahl represented the best and last chance to ensure his freedom. When con-

fronted with the decision to either ensure Sergeant Bergdahl's safety, or allow him to die in enemy captivity, the President decided to act in order to save his life.

When we send our brave men and women in the Armed Services onto the field of battle, we send them with the assurance that we will never forget their sacrifice, and that we will leave no man behind. The President has demonstrated true leadership by honoring this pledge. I do not believe it is appropriate for Congress to undermine that leadership, or that pledge.

TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING FOR HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2014

HON. RENEE L. ELLMERS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 2014

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act of 2014. This bill will improve the health care system's ability to recognize and respond to victims of trafficking by providing health care professionals with the knowledge and training they need to deal with this modern day form of slavery.

We know that the victims of sex and labor trafficking in the United States suffer from wide-ranging physical and mental health problems. In one study, over 87% of these victims have sought care from an emergency ward in a hospital, a neighborhood clinic, or a family physician. Because of this, these health care professionals are in a unique position to identify trafficking victims and help them recover.

At the same time, we are also discovering that healthcare providers and professionals remain unaware of sex trafficking and the role that they can play to help them. In fact, even when medical personnel think they have identified a victim, which is only about half the time, they don't know how to help or are not even aware that there are protocols in place to refer them to others for help. This is even more distressing because the medical professional is probably the one expert most likely to encounter a victim at some point during their enslavement.

Although trafficking is demonstrably expensive to our society—and a debilitating public health issue—current federal law does not require medical care professionals to receive training regarding the nature and scope of sex trafficking in this country. Nor does current law require health care professionals to be trained to identify possible trafficking victims, nor how to respond to victims if they are able to identify them. My bill would take the first necessary steps to make this training available.

The Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act mandates that HHS take steps to develop evidence-based protocols to recognize and respond to victims of trafficking. It also sets up a comprehensive pilot program to test these protocols and determine whether or not the protocols will actually result in victim identification and rescue. Those protocols that are shown to be evidence-based can then be taught to health care professionals as part of their medical and nursing school curriculum. They can also be included in continuing-education modules.